JOURNEYS IN THE SUN: TRAVEL LITERATURE AND DESIRE IN THE BALEARIC ISLANDS (1903-1939)

Eduard Moyà

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Directores de la col·lecció Maria Juan Garau Patricia Bastida Rodríguez

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the Balearic Islands represent an important reference in the imagination of leisure and tourism in contemporary Europe. Critics have established the first years of the twentieth century as the beginning of the tourist industry on the islands with the opening of the first hotel (1903), the foundation of the first local institution for the promotion of tourism, Fomento de Turismo or Tourism Board (1905), the first guided tour to the Balearic Islands by Thomas Cook (1903), and the publication of Amengual's La industria de los forasteros (1903) which showed interest in promoting the islands as a tourist resort. Since then, the image of the Balearic Islands¹ has shifted, and they have developed from being a quiet and pastoral winter resort to become a popular destination for pleasure-seeking tourists and "sea 'n' sun seaside tourism" (Simonis 2005: 615). By comparing the postcards presented below (figs. 1 and 3 dating from the early years of the twentieth century; figs. 2 and 4 representing its last decades) one understands that the shift in the representation of the islands is significant.

^{1.} See map of the islands in fig. 30.



Fig. 1 Erwin Hubert, Acuarela desde Santa Catalina (Palma: Libreria Ripoll).

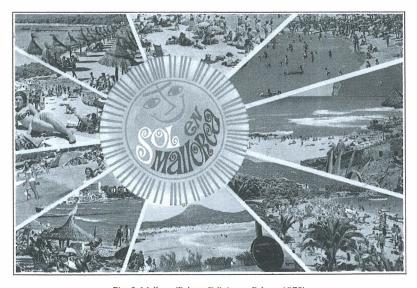


Fig. 2 Mallorca (Palma: Ediciones Palma, 1970).



Fig. 3 Una Mallorquina (España: Unión Postal Universal).



Fig. 4 Mallorca (Palma: Ediciones Palma, 1986)

Similarly, the following passages from two travel guides show that, indeed, the travel scenarios encountered by travellers to the Balearics differ according to the period. On the one hand, the travel guide *Baedeker's Spain and Portugal* shows that in 1913,

[t]he Balearic Islands are becoming more and more popular as a quiet resort in winter and spring on account of their mild and equable climate, their moderate rainfall, their attractive scenery, their comfortable accommodation, and their good order and administration [...]. (Baedeker 1913: 271–272)

On the other hand, the twenty-first century visitor reads in the Lonely Planet travel guide that: